

Being a Catholic Baptismal Sponsor

The Role of Baptismal Sponsors

Peace of Christ to you! You have been asked to be a baptismal sponsor (godparent) for a child at our parish. The parents and our Church are asking you to answer a special calling! In serving as a godparent, you are professing your willingness, readiness, and ability to help the parents of this child bring him/her up in the faith and grow in a relationship with Christ and the Church.

These parents and the parish community are asking you to set an example for this godchild in practicing your faith, in sharing your faith with your godchild, and in praying for your godchild. Being a godparent is different from being a relative, a friend, or good acquaintance of the parents, though these are all beautiful things! A godparent has the special role of helping the parents share the joy, truth, and light of their Catholic faith with their child, and in providing further example and guidance in the godchild's life.

Baptism is the beginning of our lifelong journey of faith. Our faith lives change as we grow—sometimes we feel very close to God, other times we don't. Sometimes we have many questions, and sometimes we feel like we understand it all. What is constant is the presence of Christ. You will help these parents in passing on our Catholic faith to the child, so that he/she may grow in his or her relationship with Christ throughout the ups and downs of life, and freely profess this faith as an adult. You will be the presence of Christ and the Catholic community to this child.

As you prepare to be a godparent, you should ask yourself if you are indeed ready to take on this responsibility. Are you able to share your faith? Are you an active member of your parish? Have you received the Sacrament of Confirmation? Will you be able to give your godchild the attention and care he/she needs? If you are someone who is already actively living your faith, these answers may come easily. If not, now may be an opportunity to grow in your own faith, so that you can pass it on your godchild. Or, you may decide that you are not ready to be a godparent at this time.

So, what does a godparent do? Godparents are active in their godchild's life in many ways. You can prepare with the parents, and be there for the baptism! At the baptism, you will be asked if you are ready to assist the parents in raising the child in the practice of the faith, to which you respond with the other godparent, "We are". You may be asked to clothe the child in the white baptismal garment, which symbolizes the child's new purity in Christ. You may be asked to hold the baptismal candle, and to help "keep the flame of faith burning in the child's heart."

After the baptism, you can make it a tradition to remember the child's baptismal day every year—the child's "birthday" into the Body of Christ. Call your godchild, visit, or send a card. Spend time with your godchild. Each year, this day can be a special celebration for you. Keep your godchild in your prayers and share your faith with the child. You can also share your faith by giving the child age-appropriate books, teaching him/her about saints, attending the child's first Communion and Confirmation, and/or sharing other important moments in the child's life. A godparent has a lifelong bond with his/her godchild, and it is a special and wonderful relationship.

(OVER)

Why do I need to have received the Sacrament of Confirmation in order to be a godparent?

The Sacrament of Confirmation, along with Baptism and Eucharist, is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation. Through these three— Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist—we are fully initiated into the Catholic Church. It is a regular part of becoming fully initiated into the faith in our lives. Through Confirmation, the gifts that we receive from God at our baptism are further strengthened, so that we can be an apostle of Christ to the world. The Church requires that godparents must be confirmed in order to be strengthened in the role of witnessing to the child. Additionally, you are setting an example of “adulthood” in faith, and are strengthened by the Holy Spirit as a witness to Christ. If you have been asked to be a godparent and are not Confirmed, this is a great opportunity to receive this sacrament! Ask your local parish if they have Adult Confirmation groups, and take this opportunity to be sealed with the Holy Spirit and be strengthened in your faith! We ask that you show us your intent to be confirmed on the attached response form by telling us where and when you intend to do so. If you do not intend to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, you cannot serve as a godparent.

Why is it important to be registered at a parish?

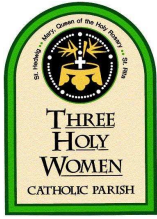
Our faith journey is not walked alone. One of the joys of being a Christian is that we are one body in Christ and we are connected as a family, with God as our Father.

Active parish membership indicates that we take our faith life seriously. We need a community of believers to support and nourish our faith life, and with whom we celebrate the Eucharist. We ask you to show your involvement and membership in your parish to express your commitment to the larger Church community. It is not merely another loop to jump through. Active parish membership helps us to get connected and stay connected to our Church! So, it’s more than merely signing a form and filling out your mailing address. It’s standing up to say that you will not just go to Mass, but that you want to be an active member in the parish, adding to the life of the community. The people make the parish, so your life gives Christ’s light to others and vice versa.

What if I’m not registered at a parish?

Registering at a parish is one basic way in which we show our commitment to worshiping with the larger Church community and living out our Catholic faith. If you are not currently registered somewhere, you should take this opportunity to register at the parish where you attend or find a new home of faith. If you have recently moved or are in the process of doing so, you may wish to contact your former parish. It’s also a good time to establish membership at your new location.

Please fill out the provided form to give us your “yes!” to your commitment to being a godparent, and have your parish sign and return the form to us (fax and address are at the top of the godparent form). Thank you for your wonderful witness to Christ’s life, and God bless you now and always!



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FORM FOR CATHOLIC BAPTISMAL SPONSORS

You have been asked to be a godparent for an upcoming baptism at Three Holy Women parish. Read the attached flyer, reflect on your responsibilities as a godparent, and fill out the commitment form. **Then have a priest or staff person from the parish at which you are registered complete the bottom portion. Please return this form to our parish by mail, fax, or email as soon as possible, attn: Baptism preparation**

Full Name of Godparent: _____

Phone and Email: _____

Person to be Baptized: _____

Parents: _____

I am a registered and participating member of _____ parish
in (city) _____ (state) _____

Check all that Apply:

- I have read the attached packet "Being a Catholic Baptismal Sponsor"
- I am a Catholic and have received the Sacrament of Confirmation. I regularly participate in Sunday Mass and give witness to my faith in Jesus Christ.
- I am a Catholic and am currently in/ will be in preparation at _____ parish and intend to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. You may reach the director of the confirmation program at this phone number: _____
- I promise to give my support to the godchild and to his/her parents by my prayers and by the example of my Catholic faith practiced in my daily life.

Godparent's signature: _____

**For Priest or Parish staff at the Parish at which you are a member
(This must be completed before sending this back to Three Holy Women):**

- The person named above is a confirmed Catholic or is in preparation for Confirmation at our parish.
- I verify that this person is a registered member of our parish who attends Mass and participates in our parish community.

Pastor/Staff Signature: _____

Parish: _____

Please affix Parish Seal:

